

**SLATS' DIARY**  
(By Oliver N. Warren)

Sunday: This has been a sad day for me for which they are 2 redds.

1st I had to go to S. S. & 2d back to school tomorrow. When I get in the legestacher and make laws I will abolish skools except ft. ball. If that hassent been done all reddy now.

Monday: Got a good 1 on Jane & Elsy. They went to a crick in the country for a cold ice swim & after they got their close offen then the farmer sed they cudent go in but he diddent mind them taken off thare close. I & Jake & Blisters mist the preformants. Tuff.

Tuesday: The teacher yesterday told Jake to find out what fratri-cide meens & this a. m. in the class he sed it meens sum thing to kill the insects witch blong in collidge societys. Teacher lookt tickled so I dont know if it was the koret ans. But it sounded OK.

Wednesday: I exorted Jane home from the partie last nite & sed to her with me you are 1 in a millyun. She replide & sed with me so are yore chantises. I dont no xactly what she ment but feel it was a dirty crack of sum kind.

Thursday: Seen in the noosepaper where 1 of the Simeas twins got married. & I cant understand how the new husband is a going to take the bride to the pitcher show and etc & leave the rest of the famly to home.

Friday: The teacher that she wood ketch Blisters napping, witch he neerly was. How many laigs has a 1000-laiged-wirm got she ast him. The 1 I xamined had 32 sed Blisters, who & I & Jake nose are wirms from a to z.

Saturday: Jake taken Elsy to the pitcher show last nite & sed to her says he I reckon yove been out with worse looken fellers than me. She diddent anser & Jake as her agen. Then she sed she herd him the 1st time & was tryen to think. Jake told me he diddent get the idear. Jake gets no brighter fast.

People who take no risks secure no reforms.

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**Ottawa Spotlight**

By Wilfrid Eggleston

Ottawa, Dec. 8.—A session beginning on January 14th which will cope with three major matters is now in sight. The highlights promise to be:

1. The United Kingdom trade agreement.
2. Canada's national and imperial defence policy.
3. State-sided housing as an important employment measure.

There will, of course, be numerous minor matters. The intention is to get all business accomplished by May 1st. This may only be possible by deferring a number of important statutes and discussions. It may well develop, as the session goes along, that it is desirable to adjourn for a while and come back in the late summer or early fall. Time will tell.

(Early Speculations)  
There have been rumors of an early budget. There have been, also, reports that substantial cuts in the British duties will be made on a wide range of textiles, iron and steel, machinery, boots and shoes etc. At this distance such speculations have not much value. But they fit in with the probabilities pretty well. Canada knows that it is going to be tough to renew the United Kingdom agreement on the old favorable terms. But it is a prize worth striving for, and every effort will be made to retain free entry—without quotas—into the British market. The quota on hams and bacon is one of the most vulnerable. Canada could afford a small cut in this without much loss, however, since we did not make use of more than a good fraction of it in the past five years.

(Defence Policy Prominent)  
It will be impossible to keep discussion away from the international situation and Canada's defence needs, especially if the European cockpit is as menacing as ever. It will be possible, from the temper of the debate in Parliament, to find out what the Canadian public will stand for. There will be no attempt, I gather, to formulate a forthright policy and tell the country to like it or lump it. That does not fit in with the political philosophy of Mackenzie King. Rather, an attempt will be made to appraise what are the wishes of the majority of the Canadian people, and give them that. If the Canadian people want a bigger air force, a renovated military force, and a few destroyers, and are ready to raise their taxes to pay for them, they will get the whole bag of tricks. I gather that so far, about all the government is prepared to offer on its own initiative is a more active air policy, confined as largely as possible to commercial aviation, but capable of fairly rapid and ready conversion to military use in case of a crisis. Not many types of planes, it is said, are dual purpose, but a thorough training of a pilot for commercial flying is expected to be a good start for a war flier, especially if his work is carried on in the northern or western pioneer territory, where grit, resourcefulness and other qualities are given a severe test.

(Aspects of Housing Plans)  
The housing legislation is expected to have three or four different aspects. First there is the present Housing Act, which provides cheap second-mortgage money for prospective home-owners. It has helped a few people in the middle income-brackets (say \$2,000 to \$10,000 per year) to go ahead with building plans. It has been of no value to the average workman, farmer, semi-skilled laborer. It will be examined thoroughly to see if it can be broadened out. Second, there is the home improvement plan now getting well under way. It needs legislation in order to guarantee the banks, who went ahead on the understanding that such would be passed. Third, there are some slum clearance projects to be considered. Fourth, and much the most important, is the state-aided low-cost housing project.

This will be to provide homes for the average Canadian worker, able to pay perhaps \$15 to \$25 per month rent. The federal government will not build such houses, itself, but it will probably provide a considerable sum of money at a very low rate of interest—perhaps as low as 2½ per cent—to assist municipalities and housing corporations to construct blocks of such dwellings, securing if possible the advantages of mass production and thus lowering the cost.

The success of such a scheme will depend on the co-operation and the ability of the municipalities to join in. Unfortunately many municipalities are already broke: it will be difficult to get much done there. The obstacle of excessive municipal taxation will also have to be met. It will take a lot of patience and courage to make such a project a success.

**Co-operation for Increased Oat Yields**

(By S. B. McCready)

I suggest that Agricultural Societies could give leadership for rural reconstruction better, perhaps, than any other organization in the country. Also I propose to offer a definite proposal for their consideration which, put into effect, might, inside two or three years, add several million dollars yearly to the income of our farmers. Sounds rather crazy, doesn't it.

The suggestion comes from the Exhibit of the Experimental Union in the Agricultural College display at Toronto Exhibition. Some readers may hold the view that neither the Toronto Exhibition, nor any other Fall Fair for that matter, really adds much to the prosperity of farming. Of course it is commonly held especially by the city Press, that great and direct benefits come from Agricultural Society Fairs. But this is a very difficult thing to prove. Merely saying so does not prove it. There is really need for some definite research on the question.

In the meantime, anyone may profitably inquire into the matter locally. Just ask yourself what evidences you can see in Hungerford and Huntingdon Twps. of improvements in status of the average farmer arising from the big and little Fairs that get so much publicity in the papers? I have asked this question in a considerable number of different places throughout the province and in almost all cases the discernible benefits are very great. Is it possible that we are just fooling ourselves about the actual value of Fall Fairs?

No one denies the value of the Fairs as community gatherings and, in some cases, as worthwhile educational opportunities, but are they really hitting the bull's eye? Does it not usually happen that after the Fair is over and the prize roosters are turned loose again in the home barnyard that NOTHING happens! The prize money is paid and a few individuals profit but the poultry industry of the Township as a whole jogs along in the same old way. The average farm housewife does not attain to a better flock or get more cash to spend for the needs of her household. Suppose the Fairs go on for another fifty or sixty years in the same way as they have for the past fifty years, will the Townships be much better off than they are now? Is there no need for new lines of attack?

**Are Increased Oat Yields Possible**  
But this article is about oat yield increases and not about poultry improvement—though the two problems are kin. The exhibit referred to above was one of a new improved oat which was produced originally by cross-breeding by the late Cecil Klink in 1907. I remember very well watching him in his patient transference of the pollen from one flower to another. Of all the many crosses made by him at that time, one between the Banner Oat and the variety known as Early Ripe has proved to be a "winner." It has been called the ERBAN to show its two parents. For nearly thirty years this hybrid oat has been continuously tested and compared with other oats on the experimental plots at the O.A.C. For over ten years it has yielded more than 12 bushels an acre more than its Banner parent and on an average matured 5 days earlier. In addition to these improved qualities of heavy yielding and earliness, it has proven exceptionally immune to smut and rust. Undoubtedly it looks to be the Oat that our farmers should be growing! Unless, of course, they already have a better oat of their own. This year and last, pound lots of the seed were tested co-operatively by members of the Experimental Union in many parts of the province. In this, it made a particularly good showing. Mr. A. W. Mason who was in charge of the Exhibit informed me that their quarter-acre plots in several counties last summer had also won many friends for the Oat and that by 1937 there will be considerable seed available for any farmer who may wish to grow it.

Well, if all this is true about the Erban Oat what is the best way of doing something about it? My vote is for the Agricultural Societies to tackle it. And preferably not on a field crop competition basis, but rather on a progressive farmers in north, south, east and west sections of the Township to take on the growing of such areas as choice pedigree seed can be procured for. Pay them well for the extra care they would have to take in the cultivation and fertilizing of the soil. Guarantee them a fair price for the crop. Assist them in cleaning, treating and marketing this improved seed and try to get every farmer in the Township to grow Erban only, if demonstration plots show it to be out-

standing. Such plots comparing the favored varieties might be on the Fair Grounds or on an adjoining farm.

**There Are Millions In It!**

According to the Statistics' Branch of the Department of Agriculture, there were over 2 1/3 million acres of oats grown on Ontario's 195,000 farms in 1934. The yield totalled 81 1/2 million bushels, averaging a little over 34 bushels to the acre, and had a money value of \$28,534,000. Oats are by long odds the largest and most valuable field crop grown by farmers.

Now suppose for the sake of argument, that there could be an average increase in yield of one bushel per acre? At 30c. a bushel that would add over \$700,000 to the country's wealth. And if it were an increase of 2 bushels per acre that would be nearly a million and a half. And 5 bushels' increase would be three and a half millions; and 10 bushels, seven millions! It beats the stock ten bushels' increase is not a fantastic market for getting rich quick! And a dream, for the average yield per acre on the Guelph Plots over the past ten years has been 85 1/2 bushels.

Here is a real constructive job for an Agricultural Society or some Township Development organization that the Society might bring into being so as to include every last farmer in the Township in the co-operative enterprise. With everybody growing Erban oats that are year after year kept up to a high quality standard (for strains do deteriorate; eternal selection is the price of continuous high yields). I have no hesitancy in saying that the Township's wealth might be increased by many thousands of dollars yearly in this way. But there has to be organization and co-operation by the farmers themselves. The government cannot do it.

I know that the thing is possible. For I have proof of it. About 25 years ago, a young school teacher named Hansuld demonstrated the possibilities of increased crop yields at a school near Tavistock. Through

the Schools' Division of the Experimental Union, he received a handful of choice seed of O.A.C. No. 21 Barley specially selected by Prof. C. A. Zavitz' department. The first year's square-rod demonstration plot tested again other local barleys, proved its superiority. The seed was kept and grown on a larger plot the second season. The third season every acre of barley grown in the school section was sown with the product of the handful received two years before. His salary was paid for many times over by this little experiment in crop improvement. But the country cannot afford such teachers! He is in a city school now.

Is it not reasonable to believe that an expert giving all his time to improved seed growing could pay his salary a good many times over for any Township in Ontario whose farmers took the long view of their job?

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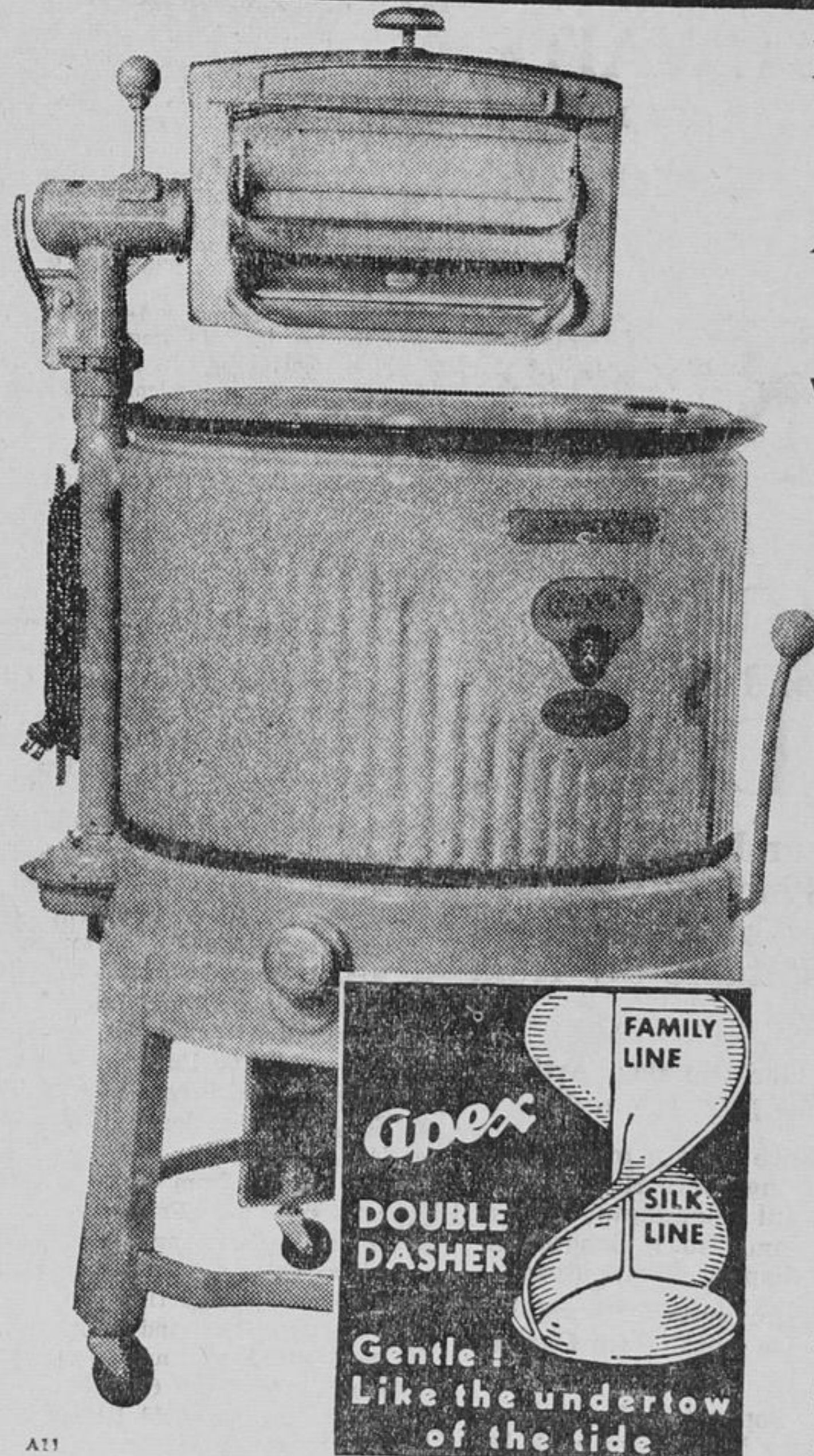
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